

Finally, let me again express my gratitude, and the gratitude of the people of Maryland, to all of you for coming to this Conference. In particular I wish to thank those of you who have come here from other parts of the country to help us with this problem. As the Governor of Maryland, and on behalf of all Marylanders, I welcome you, then, as you gather for this 1965 Conference on Fire Prevention.

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ADDRESS, MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION  
OCEAN CITY

June 22, 1966

Attending these meetings of the Maryland State Firemen's Association has become for me like celebrating a birthday, a wedding anniversary, or a big holiday like Christmas. It is a pleasure I would be most reluctant to forego.

There is a sameness about these conventions, of course, but it is not the kind of sameness that breeds tedium. One does not tire of seeing old friends, and certainly I have many, many old friends in this organization. This seventy-fourth annual meeting of our Association does — from my point of view, at least — differ from the meetings of the past few years in that it is the last that I shall attend in my capacity as Governor of Maryland. I don't believe I need remind anyone in this audience that my service to our State in that capacity ends next January — next January 25, to be precise. But I was coming to these Association conventions long before I became Governor of the State. With your kind consent, I hope to be coming to them for many more years.

It would be worse than repetitious for me to say again this year how much I have enjoyed the friendship with the members of this Association and how much I have profited by my association with the organization. You have been most kind to me over the years. I sincerely hope that in some small way I have been able to reciprocate this kindness.

Through long interest and association, I think I have developed an understanding of the problems which confront you who are charged with the responsibility of protecting the citizens of our State against the menace of fires. With such an understanding, I have watched with growing satisfaction the gigantic strides that have been made in providing a greater measure of fire safety for the people of Maryland.